

Opera Department, Faculty of Music

University of Toronto

MacMillan Theatre, Edward Johnson Building

Tuesday, May 24, 1977

8:00 p.m.

THE FIRST CANADIAN PERFORMANCE

of

THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Opera Buffa in 3 Acts

by

Giovanni Paisiello

Libretto by Giuseppe Petrosellini

English translation by Michael Albano

Conductor

Derek Bate

Director

Michael Albano

Designer

Bill Chesney

Pianist

George Brough

CAST

May 4

May 24

COUNT ALMAVIVA

Mark DuBois

John Keane

FIGARO

Mark Pedrotti

John Quillico

ROSINA

Caralyn Tomlin

Susan Lauher

DR. BARTOLO

Joel Katz

Joel Katz

DON BASILIO

Christopher Cameron

Christopher Cameron

SERVANTS OF DR. BARTOLO

Graeme Mitchell

Graeme Mitchell

Allan Marter

Allan Marter

A NOTARY

Robert Loewen

Robert Loewen

AN OFFICIAL

John Keane

Mark DuBois

Act I - A street in Seville

Act II - A room in Dr. Bartolo's house

Act III - The same

There will be two intermissions

PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director/Lighting Designer
Designer and Scenic Painter
Stage Manager
Assistant Technical Director
Assistant Stage Manager
Costume Supervisor and Cutter
Make-Up Supervisor
Wigs and Hair Dressing
Properties
Carpenter
Assistant Scenic Painter
Costume Assistant
Assistant in Electric
Running Crew Assistant

Ron Kresky
Bill Chesney
Suzanne Maynard
Barbara Barron
Deborah Osborne
Marvin Schlichting
Jack Medhurst
Louis of Rosedale
Anne Fleet
Frank Gallé
Win Keenan
Diane Mitchell
Gerda Kresky, Adam Mitchell
Patti Odell

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Canadian Opera Company, Ryerson Theatre
Department, Bill Fleming, Jack Ralph, Laird McMurray, Steve Dow,
John Richards, Graham Likeness, St. Lawrence Centre, Jean Charles
Black, Malabar Costume House.

NEXT OPERA EVENTS

May 25 - Excerpts from La Cenerentola, Manon, Maria Stuarda, and
the complete L'Heure Espagnole by Ravel.

May 27 - Excerpts from La Cenerentola, Lucia di Lammermoor, La Forza
del Destino, and Die Fledermaus.

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THE BARBER OF SEVILLE

Giovanni Paisiello (1740 - 1816), a master of the buffo idiom in melodic and rhythmic grace, was a direct forerunner of Mozart and Rossini. His setting of the Beaumarchais comedy follows closely the events of the play and anticipates by thirty-four years Rossini's work of the same name.

ACT I

In the street outside Don Bartolo's house in Seville, the young Count Almaviva, in disguise as a student, is waiting to catch a glimpse of Rosina, Don Bartolo's beautiful ward, with whom he is passionately in love. He must, however, remain hidden as Don Bartolo is determined to marry Rosina himself and therefore keeps her guarded.

Figaro now appears, with manuscript and pencil in hand and after some skirmishing in which they pretend not to see each other, the Count asks Figaro what he is doing in Seville. Figaro answers that he has wandered all over Spain composing sonnets, madrigals, odes and songs, all of which have been failures, and that he has now arrived in Seville in a new found profession - a barber.

He notices that the Count is closely watching the balcony of Bartolo's house and when the shutters to the balcony open they both hide. Rosina appears shortly followed by Don Bartolo. He watches her closely and asks her about the manuscript that she is holding. She replies it is a song from The Useless Precaution which her music master has instructed her to learn. It contains, of course, a letter and she drops it, apparently by accident, into the street. When Bartolo goes off to retrieve it, she signals the Count to pick it up. Returning to the balcony, Bartolo's suspicions are aroused and he vows to keep tighter reins on Rosina as he escorts her inside.

At last the Count is rewarded for his vigil. Rosina's message, written on the music sheet, asks him to inform her of his name, rank, and situation through the device of interpolating his own words into the song. The Count asks Figaro to help him rescue Rosina from the clutches of her guardian. Figaro replies that as Bartolo's barber, druggist and general factotum he has access to the house. In addition he has a scheme to get the Count into Bartolo's household. It appears that a regiment is camped in Seville and Figaro advises the Count to acquire a billeting order to present to Bartolo.

Bartolo's front door opens and the conspirators hide. The doctor is on his way to see Don Basilio, Rosina's music teacher, who will help arrange his secret marriage to Rosina the following day. When Bartolo has gone, the Count identifies himself to Rosina in a serenade interpolating the information that he is Lindoro, a poor student. When he receives a favourable reply, the Count is determined to make Rosina his bride before the day is out. Figaro offers his services and both men are overjoyed: Figaro at the prospect of having his pockets filled with the Count's gold, and the Count at the thought of winning Rosina.

ACT II

Rosina takes advantage of Bartolo's short absence to write a letter to her lover, but she wonders how to get it to him. Figaro enters and tells her that 'Lindoro' is truly in love with her and he (Figaro) will act as intermediary. Their meeting is cut short by the entrance of Bartolo who is in a rage. He has been to the servants quarters only to discover that Figaro has rendered his servants helpless by means of drugs and sneezing powder. He summons the servants but being unable to elicit any information from them, he angrily dismisses them.

Basilio enters and informs Bartolo that the Count of Almaviva is in Seville incognito. Bartolo knows that it was the Count who was searching for Rosina all over Madrid and he fearfully asks Basilio for advice. The latter suggests that they dispose of his opponent by slandering his reputation. Bartolo suggests that a better solution would be to marry Rosina without delay, and Basilio hurries off to carry out the plans. Rosina enters and Bartolo quizzes her about writing a letter since the missing paper and ink-stained pen have not escaped his eye. Rosina makes excuses but Bartolo reproaches her for lying and promises her that the next time he leaves the house, she will be locked in with a hundred chains and locks.

The Count now arrives disguised as a soldier and pretending to be drunk he enrages Bartolo by distorting his name and presenting him with a billeting order. Bartolo announces that he is officially exempt from this duty and goes off to find his certificate of exemption. The Count attempts to pass Rosina a letter but is cut short by Bartolo's return. When Bartolo begins to read aloud the exemption certificate, the Count snatches it from him and destroys it. Thereupon Bartolo orders him out of the house. Stalling for time, the Count chooses to interpret this as a challenge to a duel and he prepares to engage in a mock fight with Bartolo. In the resulting confusion, Rosina gets the Count's letter but the maneuver does not escape the attention of Bartolo.

With the Count finally out of the house, Bartolo questions Rosina about the letter. Rosina, having switched the Count's letter with a note from her cousin, teases Bartolo saying the note is private. Bartolo threatens to take the letter from her by force. Rosina swoons and Bartolo seizes hold of the letter, which, to his dismay, is actually a note from her cousin.

When Rosina 'revives', he begs her forgiveness and promises to be nice to her in the future. Bartolo leaves to look in on the sick Marcellina. Alone at last, Rosina reads Lindoro's letter. Too late she learns that, for tactical reasons, her lover wishes her to remain on bad terms with her guardian. Rosina expresses - not surprisingly - her longing for peace.

ACT III, Scene 1

Night has fallen and it is obvious from Bartolo's monologue that Rosina has faithfully obeyed her lover's instructions: She has become short-tempered and refuses to take her music lesson from Basilio. A loud knocking is heard and the Count arrives disguised as a scholar and announces that his name is Don Alonso and that he is a pupil of Basilio who is ill at home. Alonso has just laid his hands on a letter written to none other than the Count Almaviva by Bartolo's ward, Rosina. Now that Bartolo is making final arrangements for his wedding, this letter might prove very useful as a measure of last resort in persuading the unwilling Rosina to go through with the ceremony. By telling her that the Count had given the letter to one of his mistresses, it would appear the 'Lindoro' was the Count's procurer. This bit of slander is just what the doctor ordered and Bartolo congratulates Alonso as a worthy pupil of Basilio. For the scheme to work, however, it will be necessary for Rosina to meet Alonso. When Rosina enters, she quickly recognizes the Count and agrees to take her lesson from Don Alonso. Bartolo falls asleep during the lesson scene allowing 'Alonso' and Rosina ample opportunity for some flirting. At the conclusion of the lesson, Bartolo rouses himself from his chair and proceeds to demonstrate what he considers an entertaining ditty. Figaro enters and makes fun of the ridiculous old man.

Figaro has come to shave Bartolo and armed with the keys to Bartolo's room (including those to the shutters) he leaves to fetch soap, basin, and towels. At the sound of breaking crockery, Bartolo bolts out of the room. His momentary absence barely gives the Count enough time to tell Rosina that he will come to take her away that very night, entering the house through the shutters. He is also about to explain the letter intrigue when Bartolo returns irritated by Figaro's clumsiness.

To the dismay of everyone including Bartolo, Basilio appears. When Bartolo enquires about his health and mentions Alonso's name, Basilio is stupefied. The Count convinces Bartolo that Basilio's presence might give their plot away to Rosina. The doctor agrees and he suggests to Basilio that he does not look well. One by one, they all tell Basilio that he is burning with fever and that he should be in bed. With a bribe from the Count, Basilio 'understands' and obligingly makes his exit. With Basilio disposed of, Figaro resumes shaving Bartolo. Bartolo becomes suspicious of the musical tête à tête's between Rosina and Alonso and pushing Figaro out of the way, he sneaks up behind the lovers and overhears enough to confirm his fears that Alonso is an imposter. Bartolo explodes with rage as Figaro and the Count make a timely escape.

ACT III, Scene 2

It is late in the evening and Bartolo and Basilio conclude that Alonso is the Count's agent if not the Count himself. Wasting no time, Bartolo sends Basilio to find the Notary so that he can marry Rosina immediately. Hearing voices, Rosina enters and Bartolo plays his trump card. He produces the letter she wrote to her lover, the same letter given to him by the imposter, Alonso. Feeling herself betrayed and disgraced Rosina agrees to marry Bartolo. Furthermore, she informs her guardian of the Count's intention of entering the house at midnight. Fearing that he may be armed, Bartolo goes off into the stormy night to fetch the police. Shortly after the shutters open and the Count and Figaro enter. Rosina greets her lover with a bitter accusation: he has been planning to sell her to the Count Almaviva. Throwing off his cloak to reveal his nobleman's clothes, Almaviva reveals his true identity and Rosina is won over.

Figaro discovers the ladder has been taken just as Basilio and the Notary enter. The latter has brought the marriage contract with him and by means of more bribery Basilio is persuaded to sign the contract as witness. The ceremony concludes just as Bartolo bursts into the room with an official of the police. But the doctor is faced with a fait accompli and the police will not lay a hand on His Excellency, the Count of Almaviva. In the words of Rosina and the Count, "When young lovers plan their ruses, most precautions then are useless."